

VZCZCXRO6598  
RR RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM  
DE RUEHJA #1214/01 2541001  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
R 111001Z SEP 06  
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9808  
INFO RUEHXS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3633  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 9909  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 3744  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0010  
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 1026  
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 011214

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/11/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ID](#)  
SUBJECT: KEITH LUSE'S MEETING WITH INDONESIAN MOD DEFENSE  
STRATEGY DIRECTOR SUSANTO

Classified By: Poloff Daniel Turnbull for Reasons 1.4(b,d).

[¶1.](#) (C) Summary: Senate SFRC Senior Professional Staff Member Keith Luse met with Indonesian Defense Ministry Director General for Defense Strategy Major General Dadi Susanto on August 28 in Jakarta. Susanto characterized U.S.-Indonesian relations and military cooperation as positive. Susanto welcomed Indonesia's partnership with the Hawaii National Guard on disaster relief training and said the Indonesian military was working hard to change its human rights image, including conducting a dialogue with human-rights organizations. Indonesia wanted a continued U.S. presence in the region to counterbalance China's growing influence, but needed to improve the Indonesian public's perception of the U.S. Indonesians were beginning to distinguish between terrorism and Islam, and the Indonesian military was playing an important role in helping to track down terrorists in Indonesia. Indonesia and the Philippines were considering maritime security cooperation to impede the flow of illicit arms through the Sulawesi Sea. North Korea was seeking to escape from its international isolation, but should not be pushed into a corner. End summary.

[¶2.](#) (C) Susanto expressed satisfaction at the normalization of U.S.-Indonesian military relations. One such example was the TNI's cooperation with U.S. National Guard units in Honolulu. Such cooperation was helping to develop the TNI's ability to respond to disasters and other emergencies, which was important given Indonesia's vulnerability to natural disasters. He had just returned from one such TNI operation in a remote area where the TNI was helping the local population rebuilding houses and community infrastructure.

[¶3.](#) (C) Indonesia regarded the United States as an anchor of stability in Southeast Asia. East Asia was moving forward rapidly. In the future, the United States and China would be "two superpowers" in the region, and Indonesia would find itself in the middle. Competition was expected, but cooperation would also be essential for regional stability. Indonesia was cooperating with China in rocketry research, and was cooperating with other countries militarily as a result of the U.S. "embargo" in the 1990s. Indonesia had no plans for a nuclear military program, but had several commercial power-generating reactors in central Java. Indonesia risked being left behind in the region, and had to reform. Malaysia and even Vietnam were now moving ahead very fast. Indonesia must do the same or become like Burma.

[¶4.](#) (C) To further strengthen the bilateral relationship, a top priority should be to improve the Indonesian public's perception of the United States. The Indonesian media often

presented a misleading picture. It was important to bridge this gap between perception and reality. Most Indonesian Muslims were moderate, and most of the Indonesian pesantren, or madrasas (parochial schools) were moderate. (Note: Susanto is a Christian.) The United States was already supporting educational and informational programs in these schools, but this must be done with regard for Indonesian cultural sensitivities. Both the Indonesian government and Indonesian NGOs could help in this regard. The second Bali bombings had made clear to the Muslim community the need to distinguish between Islam and terrorism, and Islamic leaders had sent this message out within the Islamic community, including the schools. The Muslim leadership, he noted, could be very effective, as it had been in earlier campaigns on family planning where its endorsement and assistance was critical to reaching the grassroots level.

15. (C) Terrorism was a real threat to Indonesia, and the Indonesian government took this threat seriously. Terrorist methods and equipment were increasingly sophisticated. The TNI, which President Yudhoyono had directed to help fight terrorism domestically, was making a major contribution owing to its intelligence capabilities through its traditional territorial structure. The TNI had an NCO in nearly every village across the country to report unusual activities in their respective communities. As a result, terrorists were being flushed out of rural areas, where the local population could easily identify them. Now they were moving to the suburbs of larger cities. More broadly, the national military intelligence body, BAIS, was coordinating in a subordinate role with the national intelligence agency, BIN, through regular joint meetings.

JAKARTA 00011214 002 OF 002

16. (C) The TNI was working very hard to change its human-rights image and to change its practices in line with democratic norms. That effort involved establishing a dialogue with human rights groups which were critical of the TNI's past record, in an effort to present the human side of the TNI soldier and overcome misperceptions. The dialogue with Human Rights Watch, which had opposed military cooperation with the TNI as paying too high a price, was bearing fruit. The new guidance manuals for soldiers devoted much space to the rules of engagement.

17. (C) Indonesia and the Philippines were considering collective maritime security arrangements in the South Sulawesi Sea. In addition to traffic across the Sulawesi Sea from the Philippines, old weapons from the Vietnam War were still finding their way from private sellers in Laos and Cambodia to Thailand and from there through Malaysia and Indonesia to the Sulawesi area.

18. (C) North Korea was isolated, and was seeking to escape from that isolation, going so far as to seek military cooperation with Burma. Indonesia's relations with North Korea allowed Indonesia to talk directly to the North Koreans. North Korea boasted about its technological achievements, including development of a new wonder strain of wheat and radars which could lock onto U.S. stealth planes. (Note: Susanto offered no comment on the veracity of such claims.) The international community should avoid pushing North Korea into a corner, but rather draw it out.

19. (C) The U.S. military could improve its reception among the local population in Iraq by adopting the Indonesian practice of praying together with the families of fallen comrades. U.S. soldiers could pray with survivors of Iraqis who had fallen victim to the violence. Indonesia would also be interested in exchanging U.S. and Indonesian military chaplains to learn from and share with one another.

PASCOE